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COMMITTEE ON CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

ACTIVITIES OF THE ECLAC SYSTEM TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

Note by the secretariat

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SUMMARY

Pursuant to the general recommendations, applicable to United Nations bodies, of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (1978), the ECLAC system --which also includes the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) and the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE)-- is carrying out a series of activities to promote and support technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) at the regional, subregional and interregional levels. More specifically, these activities respond to mandates conferred on the secretariat by the members of the Commission, the institutional structure of which provides for a sessional committee, as set forth in ECLAC resolution 387(XVIII), to deal with matters concerning co-operation among developing countries and regions.

The present report is submitted as a working document for the Sessional Committee's consideration at the twenty-third session of the Commission, to be held in May 1990 in Caracas; it describes the principal operational activities carried out by the ECLAC system since the preceding session, at which resolution 491(XXII) on TCDC was adopted.

The first and second parts of the report, after discussing the experience gained by ECLAC during the first decade of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, identify the main TCDC activities and projects and the operational ways and means used by the system.

The third part provides further details on the activities carried out during the biennium 1988-1989. To that end, it includes a general review of the results of the biennium; an examination of TCDC advances with regard to co-ordination with United Nations organizations and other regional bodies; a detailed description of TCDC promotion and support activities on the basis of the most significant projects and sectors; and a list of co-operation initiatives with countries of other developing regions.

The fourth and final part contains an outline of suggestions for future secretariat activities which might be of interest to the Committee in its work.

I. TCDC WITHIN THE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE OF ECLAC

1. Since the mid-1970s, the ECLAC system --which includes the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) and the ECLAC secretariat itself-- has been carrying out a wide range of activities to mobilize its own capacity to promote and support projects and initiatives in the field of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries (TCDC/ECDC) throughout the Latin American and Caribbean region. Strictly speaking, ever since its establishment in the late 1940s, ECLAC has been deeply involved in promoting and strengthening intraregional co-operation and integration; the present report, however, refers to the more precise concept of TCDC which arose within the United Nations system with the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (hereinafter referred to as the Plan) in 1978.

2. The general framework of the ECLAC system in this sphere is provided by the Plan itself, which states that United Nations organizations should play a role as catalysts and promoters of TCDC, which is essentially carried out at the initiative of governments themselves. In accordance with the nature of this role, ECLAC activities to promote and support TCDC at the regional, subregional and interregional levels are governed by the specific mandates conferred upon the ECLAC secretariat by the States members of the Commission.

3. TCDC was strengthened within the institutional structure of ECLAC at the eighteenth session of the Commission (La Paz, Bolivia, 1979), when its member countries adopted resolution 387(XVIII), which created a sessional committee to examine the progress made by ECLAC in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The Sessional Committee met in 1981 (nineteenth session), 1984 (twentieth session), 1986 (twenty-first session) and 1988 (twenty-second session). The Committee's work has been an important factor in strengthening and consolidating the Commission's role in TCDC matters of direct interest to Governments. Since 1981, the Committee's examination in detail of the work of ECLAC in this area has provided the basis for the adoption of resolutions dealing specifically with TCDC in the Commission, namely: 387(XVIII); 438(XIX); 439(XIX); 440(XIX); 459(XX); 460(XX); 486(XXI); 491(XXII) and 492(XXII).

II. THE FIRST DECADE OF THE BUENOS AIRES PLAN OF ACTION: EXPERIENCE OF THE ECLAC SYSTEM

4. The meeting of the Sessional Committee at the twenty-third session of ECLAC is being held on the threshold of the second decade of the Plan's implementation. It is therefore worth recapitulating the Commission's work in support and promotion of TCDC in order to provide some perspective for purposes of considering the work of the past biennium and projecting some guidelines for the immediate future.

1. General review

5. In the first decade of the Plan (1978-1988), sustained efforts were made to enhance the use of TCDC mechanisms in the sectors included in the ECLAC programme of work. At the regional level, certain sectors deserve special mention, namely: maritime and land transport; natural resources, especially mining and the management of water resources; information services, including the creation of data banks; capital goods industries; promotion of trade and a number of services related to exports; and social and economic planning and policy co-ordination. Efforts to promote the use of TCDC have also recently included the integration of women into development and the planning and implementation of the 1990 census round.

6. At the subregional level, TCDC initiatives have also included a wide range of important sectors. In the isthmus of Central America, for example, these include electrical interconnection, savings and loan co-operatives and food distribution systems. In the Caribbean subregion, support was provided to co-operation processes, in the framework of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC), through the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

7. Lastly, various interregional TCDC activities were carried out in conjunction with the other regional commissions, especially through the concrete initiatives of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), as described in detail later in this report.

8. Some of the results obtained within the ECLAC system during the period with regard to co-operation among developing countries and regions may be summarized as follows:

a) Since January 1981, 30 issues of the periodical bulletin Co-operation and Development have been published uninterruptedly as part of the secretariat's regular publications programme. This bulletin has become an effective instrument for disseminating information on TCDC/ECDC activities carried out by the ECLAC system and other relevant United Nations organizations. It is interesting to note that regular requests are received from institutions within and outside the region for this publication or for more information on TCDC activities referred to in it. The bulletin is published in English and Spanish, and the mailing list contains approximately 800 subscribers to the English version and 1 400 to the Spanish version.

b) Another activity for the dissemination of TCDC information was the publication of two volumes of "Resúmenes de documentos sobre cooperación entre países en desarrollo", in the INFOPLAN series of ECLAC/CLADES; these summaries include all publications on the subject of TCDC contained in the bibliographical data banks of the ECLAC system. A third volume will be published in late 1990 through the ECLAC publications programme.

c) A number of projects have been formulated and executed to promote TCDC with extrabudgetary financing, on topics such as the creation of container repair and maintenance enterprises; the management of water resources in highland basins; negotiations for exporting the most important commodities; creation of interior cargo terminals; harmonization of customs procedures; strengthening of ties among national centres for co-ordinating TCDC activities; determination of opportunities for enhancing co-operation between the Caribbean countries and the rest of the region; co-operation in carrying out the 1990 round of population and housing censuses.

d) In connection with the institutional infrastructure to promote co-operation in the region, ECLAC has helped create regional and subregional systems which involve the participation of public and private agents in specific sectors. Outstanding examples include the Latin American Mining Organization (OLAMI), founded in 1984 to promote co-operation in the area of mineral resources; the Latin American Association of Export Credit Insurance Agencies (ALASECE), also established in 1983 as a regional system of export insurance agencies; the Central American Electrification Council, created in 1982 to promote the integration of electricity systems in the Central American subregion; the Latin American Association of Capital Goods Industries (ALABIC), a regional association which groups together private entrepreneurs in the capital goods industry from some of the countries of the region; the System of Co-operation and Co-ordination among Planning Bodies in Latin America (SCCOPALC), established at the initiative of ILPES; the Regional Programme to Strengthen Co-operation among National Information Networks and Systems for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOLAC), organized by ECLAC and CLADES, in conjunction with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in the area of information for social and economic development. In addition, ECLAC has carried out preparations, under a joint project with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), for a regional system of national institutions to provide training in rural development.

9. Joint initiatives with other regional commissions warrant a brief mention here. In 1979, ECLAC and ESCAP organized a meeting in New Delhi of officials and experts from Latin America and India to determine areas of possible co-operation, which was followed by a meeting of representatives of the industrial sectors of India and Latin America, held in Santiago in 1980. From 1980 to 1983, ECA and ECLAC carried out a joint experimental project, funded by UNDP, to promote co-operation between Africa and Latin America in trade, human resources and science and technology. In 1983, ECLAC co-operated with the Government of Argentina in organizing a tour of private entrepreneurs to India and Indonesia and, with the same Government, organized exploratory TCDC missions to African countries in 1986 and 1987.

10. It should be noted that, since the mid-1980s, ECLAC has been making a special effort to encourage the use of TCDC as a means of helping to overcome the serious difficulties which began to face the countries of the region when the effects of the international economic crisis of the 1980s shook national economies and gravely endangered the development prospects of a great majority of the Latin American and Caribbean countries. This concern was brought out specifically at the Latin American Conference held in Quito in 1984, and has been the focus of the Commission's major technical and substantive activities since that time. This important feature of Latin American and Caribbean development is worth mentioning because it added a new and unexpected dimension which was not present in the basic philosophy of the Plan. The predominant conditions in 1978, when the Plan of Action was adopted, were radically different from those which emerged dramatically as a result of the impact of the crisis on the entire region.

2. TCDC activities and projects in specific sectors and categories

11. The trends in TCDC activities in the major part of the first decade of implementation of the Plan of Action may be analysed on the basis of the reports which the ECLAC secretariat periodically submits to the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, which is the focal point of the TCDC system. Bearing in mind the limited nature of the data, due to the changes made in the format of the reports, the following table may be of use in illustrating the general trends in TCDC in the ECLAC system.

12. During the 1986-1988 biennium, the projects directly aimed at promoting TCDC or including important elements aimed at promoting the use of TCDC in their execution, identified by area, code number and source of financing, were as follows:

i) Strengthening of institutions

RLA/88/P61: Integration of population in development planning for the Caribbean (UNFPA Trust Fund).

RLA/87/006: Strengthening of federal savings and loan co-operatives in Central America (UNDP).

RLA/86/029: Development and dissemination of new public policy planning and programming techniques (ILPES) (UNDP).

RLA/86/002: Support for Latin American foreign services institutions (UNDP).

RLA/88/P08: Support for activities connected with the design, preparation and execution of the 1990 round of population and housing censuses in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNFPA Trust Fund).

ECLAC: SUMMARY OF TCDC PROMOTION ACTIVITIES IN THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGION IN THE PERIOD 1980-1986

Sector i/	1980 Activities	1981-1982 Projects
Planning (ILPES)	6	3
Transport	8	3
Natural resources	2	2
Information	-	2
Environment	-	1
Export financing	-	1
Academic co-operation	-	1
Rural development	-	1
Capital goods	-	1
Others	3	2
Total	19	17

Category ii/	1983-1984 Activities	1984-1986 Projects
Strengthening of institutions	5	5
Co-operation networks	1	6
Information systems	2	-
Strengthening of focal points	1	1
Training	2	-
Studies/prelim. missions	8	\
Workshops and seminars	7	> 9
Project planning and execution	1	/
Total	27	21

i/ For 1980 and the biennium 1983-1984, the unit of classification for the respective reports was "activities", but for the bienniums 1981-1982 and 1984-1986 it was "projects". This change was made because of the desire to identify the source of financing more precisely.

ii/ The categories of classification by type of activity also changed during the period: for 1980 and the biennium 1981-1982, the classification "sectors" was used, in line with the work plans of the reporting organizations, but for the biennium 1983-1984 the categories used by UNDP for the classification of TCDC activities or projects were employed.

ITA/85/S84: Co-operation for Latin American development in selected areas and countries of the Andean subregion (Italian Government Trust Fund).

CAD/88/S01: Support for the food security programme for Central America and Panama (contributions by beneficiary countries).

ii) Development of co-operation networks

CAM/88/S06: Operation and planning of electricity systems in Central America (contributions by beneficiary countries).

ITA/84/S83: Water resource planning and management in high mountain river basins in Latin America (Italian Government Trust Fund).

RFA/84/S10: Horizontal co-operation in water resource project management in Latin America and the Caribbean (Phase I) (Trust Fund of the Federal Republic of Germany).

PMA/88/S01: Integration of environmental considerations into development projects, programmes and policies in Latin America and the Caribbean (Phase II) (UNEP Trust Fund).

iii) Information systems

IRC/87/S59: Technological information on patents in the Caribbean (Canadian Government Trust Fund).

IRC/86/S23: Information for development policies and planning (INFOPLAN Phase II) (Canadian Government Trust Fund).

IRC/85/S50: Information network for the Caribbean (Canadian Government Trust Fund).

iv) Strengthening of focal points

HOL/86/S45: Promotion of technical co-operation through the strengthening of national TCDC focal points in Latin America and the Caribbean (Phase I) (Netherlands Government Trust Fund).

v) Meetings, seminars and workshops

ARG/87/S58: Organization of the Second Latin American Technical Meeting on Urban Transport (contributions by beneficiary countries).

FRA/88/S24: Preparation and organization of the seminar on intraregional co-operation and integration (French Government Trust Fund).

HOL/87/S60: Technical co-operation among Latin American countries concerning the transport, distribution, marketing and competitiveness of their exports (Netherlands Government Trust Fund).

vi) Studies and surveys

ARG/85/S17: Technical and economic co-operation among developing countries (contributions by beneficiary countries).

HOL/84/S03: Economic co-operation among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean for the establishment of interior freight terminals (Netherlands Government Trust Fund).

3. Main forms of operation

13. In short, the experience accumulated by ECLAC in the course of the first decade of the Plan of Action backs up the idea that the diversity of situations in which the countries have actually managed their own TCDC activities is a fundamental factor to be taken into account in the planning, execution and follow-up of activities and projects aimed at intensifying the use of TCDC as an instrument for the development of the countries of the region.

14. This range of situations extends from the countries of relatively greater development which are able to provide a wide range of TCDC offers, to those which are rather on the demand side as regards TCDC. This diversity is clearly reflected in the various policies which emerge, according to the recognized priority given to TCDC in the national development effort; in the profound differences as regards the degree of institutionalization of the national TCDC focal points; in the importance and influence of the institutions which have the greatest weight (for example, public enterprises in strategic sectors) and have the legal and material means to effect "autonomous" exchanges of TCDC; and in the capacity of the countries to operate TCDC as a relatively complete process, and not just as isolated exchanges. One of the main lessons to be drawn from this situation is that there are no hard and fast "recipes" for promoting technical co-operation among the countries of the region. TCDC is a process which must be worked out on a basis in keeping with the particular objectives and needs of each participating country.

15. Within this framework, and in accordance with the substantive lines of its own programme of work, ECLAC has used the following forms of operation to promote TCDC:

a) Provision of information services through the Latin American Economic and Social Documentation Centre (CLADES) --which forms part of the ECLAC system-- with the aim of creating or strengthening national information systems through intensive exchanges among the countries themselves;

b) The inclusion of this topic in technical studies with the aim of determining the specific opportunities for TCDC in important sectors and

exploring the need for co-operation among the participating countries, as well as possible sources of funds for financing it;

c) The preparation of specific projects aimed at promoting TCDC, together with the mobilization of extrabudgetary financial resources for executing them, in close collaboration with the relevant focal point for the exchange of TCDC in the respective sector;

d) The establishment and technical support of TCDC networks involving the participation of the real agents of co-operation, which in most cases correspond to private entities of the respective sector;

e) The provision of technical support to the national TCDC focal points, in close collaboration with the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries;

f) Co-ordination with the regional organizations which participate actively in the use of various forms of TCDC in their respective fields of competence, with special emphasis on co-ordination initiatives operating with the support of UNDP and the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Economic System (SELA);

g) Consultation and co-ordination with the other regional commissions for the adoption of joint measures to promote TCDC at the interregional level.

III. ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE AND SUPPORT TCDC IN THE BIENNIUM 1988-1989

1. General overview

16. In the biennium 1988-1989, which began, broadly speaking, with the twenty-second session held in April 1988 in Rio de Janeiro, ECLAC continued to provide its support and collaboration to strengthen and expand the use of TCDC in response to the needs of the countries of the region, in keeping with the general lines of its programme of work and the specific mandates contained in resolution 491(XXII), adopted at that session, on technical co-operation among developing countries and regions. The mandates given to the secretariat in that resolution referred to the following matters: a) intensifying activities to support the national TCDC focal points; b) continuing to incorporate forms of TCDC in the activities of the secretariat's programme of work; c) continuing to put into effect initiatives aimed at disseminating more widely information on TCDC capacities and requirements in the countries of the region; d) intensifying co-ordination with other bodies and organizations which carry out activities of support, promotion or execution of TCDC projects in the region; e) collaborating with the Permanent Secretariat of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) in its activities with national TCDC focal points; and f) continuing to promote joint actions with the other regional commissions for the implementation of interregional co-operation projects.

17. A large part of the work performed during the period covered by this report was aimed at carrying forward the major tasks which ECLAC had been conducting during the preceding biennium. These activities were undertaken in connection with projects whose financing came from extrabudgetary resources which were aimed at promoting and supporting TCDC in specific sectors as well as ongoing efforts in regard to the dissemination of information and the provision of support for initiatives taken by national co-ordination centres. As will be discussed later on, ECLAC also embarked upon new projects during the 1988-1989 biennium to promote TCDC in some particularly significant areas, as well as helping to strengthen and expand the regional TCDC co-ordination mechanism being developed in collaboration with UNDP through its Special Unit for TCDC and with the Permanent Secretariat of SELA.

18. Finally, during the period in question ECLAC also intensified its collaboration with the UNDP Special Unit for TCDC both in respect of the appraisal of the first decade of the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which constituted a special concern of the sixth session of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (September 1989), and in connection with activities to support the sectoral exercises in regional TCDC programming in the fields of aquaculture and maritime activities which were conducted during 1989.

2. Co-ordination with organizations of the United Nations system and with other regional bodies

19. The striking progress made with respect to regional TCDC co-ordination activities during the biennium warrants special attention in view of the concerns which have been expressed to ECLAC by the member countries in this regard.

a) Special meeting of TCDC focal points of organizations within the United Nations system. This meeting, which was held at United Nations Headquarters on 25-26 February 1988, was convened by the Administrator of UNDP with a view to strengthening the co-ordination of TCDC within the system.

20. The meeting's achievements included agreements to support an increased utilization of the Information Referral System (INRES) and to promote the expansion of the system's coverage, as well as to encourage the organizations within the system to take an active part in the national TCDC programming exercises conducted with the support of the UNDP Special Unit for TCDC so as to assist the host country of such events and the countries invited to participate in these exercises to identify the specific components of their TCDC supply and demand. Notable progress was also made in relation to the simplification and refinement of the format for the activities reports which organizations of the United Nations system send to the Administrator of UNDP in connection with the periodic meetings held by the High-Level Committee on the Review of TCDC, as well as in respect to the possibility of including comparable quantitative information in such reports.

b) Meetings for co-ordination among regional bodies engaged in TCDC activities. The third and fourth such meetings took place during the biennium. From the very outset, ECLAC has strongly supported these meetings, which help to avoid a duplication of effort among organizations both within and outside the United Nations system. The main aspects of these meetings are summarized below:

i) ECLAC and the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) participated in the third consultative meeting of the TCDC focal points of organizations within the United Nations system and other bodies active in the field of TCDC in the region, which was held in Caracas on 15-16 August 1988 at the headquarters of the secretariat of SELA. The following bodies attended the meeting: UNDP, ECLAC/ILPES, SELA, UNESCO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The work carried out at the meeting included the examination of proposals for revitalizing the Plan of Action on the occasion of its tenth anniversary and the analysis of possible joint activities by the participating bodies as well as proposals to support the meetings of national directors of technical co-operation and of the Special Group for TCDC convened each year by the Permanent Secretariat of SELA prior to the corresponding regular meeting of the Latin American Council of SELA. The bodies participating in this third consultative meeting also decided to formalize the name of this co-ordination mechanism and to welcome the incorporation of other regional bodies.

ii) The Fourth Meeting of the Co-ordination Mechanism for Regional Bodies and Units Engaged in TCDC Activities took place on 21 July 1989 in Cartagena, Colombia. The participating bodies and agencies, which were considerably greater in number on this occasion, included: UNDP, ECLAC/ILPES, UNESCO, SELA, IDB, IOM, UNCTAD, FAO, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Action Committee in Support of the Economic and Social Development of Central America (CADESCA). The meeting placed special importance on the need for such bodies and agencies to provide support, within their respective fields of endeavour, for the activities carried out by the countries of the region within the framework of the annual regional TCDC programming exercises which are promoted by SELA with the support of UNDP.

3. TCDC activities of the ECLAC system at the regional level

21. In accordance with the principles and basic definitions set forth in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, TCDC is the responsibility of the governments of the countries concerned. The organizations of the United Nations system do not carry out TCDC; instead, they confine their efforts to the promotion and support, within their areas of expertise, of the initiatives taken by governments in this regard. In keeping with this role, the ECLAC system

conducts activities designed to facilitate and permit TCDC among its member countries within the framework of its programme of work and, within the various areas covered by that programme, strives to strengthen elements or mechanisms likely to foster TCDC.

22. These promotion and support activities generally form part of specific technical co-operation projects. These projects, which are funded by means of extrabudgetary resources, concern the following areas of endeavour: i) identification of opportunities for co-operation among developing countries or groups of countries; ii) support for the exchange of experiences among developing countries in given areas or sectors; iii) the strengthening of the countries' institutional capacities to engage in TCDC activities; and iv) utilization of the developing countries' existing capabilities in respect of TCDC activities.

a) A synopsis of TCDC modalities in specific projects

23. Many of the projects conducted during the biennium included activities specifically designed to promote TCDC in terms of one or another of the above-mentioned areas. Although this fact makes it difficult to provide a detailed account of all such activities, those in which elements of TCDC were crucial to the achievement of project objectives are described below.

Project: Information for development policies and planning (INFOPLAN, Phase III) (IRC/86/S23)

24. The third phase of this project was completed in the course of the biennium. The objectives of this project, which is executed by ECLAC through its Latin American Centre for Economic and Social Documentation (CLADES) with support from the Government of Canada, were to promote a more effective dissemination and more widespread use of the services provided by the Planning Information System for Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOPLAN) and to furnish the necessary support to permit national information infrastructures to participate fully in the activities of the system's information network.

Project: Economic co-operation among Latin American and Caribbean countries in the establishment of inland cargo terminals (HOL/84/S03)

25. During the 1988-1989 biennium ECLAC continued its work on the activities provided for under this project, which is supported by the Government of the Netherlands. The aims of this project are to gather and distribute information concerning cargo flows and the financing, equipment and personnel required to establish inland freight terminals. To that end, in August and September 1988 the project organized national seminars in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay for the discussion of the results achieved to date with a view to facilitating an exchange of experiences among the participating countries. Subsequently, in March 1989, a regional seminar to foster technical co-operation in this regard was held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago in conjunction with the Latin American Shipowners' Association (ALAMAR).

Project: Seminar on intraregional co-operation and integration (FRA/88/S15)

26. This project, which was carried out between March and December 1988 with financing from the Government of France, involved the preparation, organization and execution of a regional seminar on intraregional co-operation and integration designed to contribute to the efforts being made by the countries of the region in this area. The seminar was held in December 1988 in Montevideo, Uruguay, and generated a series of proposals aimed at contributing to the formulation and implementation of specific government policies which would take into account the present situation in the region and the future outlook for its economic and social development.

Project: Patents: Technological information - Caribbean (IRC/87/S59)

27. During the period covered by this report ECIAC carried forward the activities of this project, which draws upon the support of the Government of Canada. The project was begun in August 1987 with the aim of establishing a system for strengthening and enhancing the capabilities of the countries of the Caribbean subregion in the field of industrial property through the utilization of patent information. The project's operational mechanism consists of the formation of a Patent Information and Documentation Unit attached to the ECIAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in co-ordination with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). In addition to WIPO, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) are participating in this project as associate agencies.

Project: Technical co-operation among the countries of Latin America concerning the transport, distribution, commercialization and competitiveness of their exports (HOL/87/S60)

28. This project was launched in July 1988 with the aid of the Government of the Netherlands for the purpose of conducting a series of case studies whose aim is to permit an exchange of experiences leading to the identification of the adjustments which need to be made in transport systems so that they may fulfil their proper role in the export trade of the countries of the region. The project's activities have been executed in co-ordination with the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and in close contact with the marketing firms and export consortiums of the participating countries, which are the primary agents of co-operation in this sector. In addition, activities were carried out under this project with a view to the preparation and organization of a meeting of customs experts in August 1989.

Project: Natural disaster prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean (ITA/87/S79)

29. With the support of the Government of Italy and the participation of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as an associate agency, ECIAC embarked upon this project during the first half of 1988. The project provides for technical co-operation activities in a new field which is being incorporated into the tasks of the Organization in response to specific concerns of the countries of the region. The goal of the project is to determine existing needs for the establishment of flood-control systems in

selected river basins within the region and to further the training of human resources in this sphere.

Project: Planning and management of water resources in mountain watersheds in Latin America (ITA/84/S83)

30. The programme of work for this project was completed during the biennium. This project, which was executed by ECLAC with the assistance of the Government of Italy, the support of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the collaboration of the Board of the Cartagena Agreement (JUNAC), focused on promoting horizontal technical co-operation to improve the planning and management of water resources in mountain watersheds. A series of nine studies were published which deal with various policies and forms of management for the development of mountain watersheds and highland zones which have been applied in Andean countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela).

Project: Integration of environmental considerations into development projects, programmes and policies in Latin America and the Caribbean (PMA/88/S01)

31. The second phase of this project, which is also supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), was initiated in January 1988 as a means of facilitating and strengthening the regional co-ordination of appropriate policies and programmes for the incorporation of environmental considerations into development projects. To that end, the preparations and organizational arrangements were made for a number of technical seminar/workshops based on specific experiences such as the reclamation and conservation of soil, water resources and forests (Honduras); the pollution produced by the Esmeraldas refinery (Ecuador); the rehabilitation of terraced farmland and the corresponding irrigation works (Peru); and the institutional structure for the conservation of national patrimony (Argentina).

Project: The impact of subsidies and different systems of control and organization of public urban transport in Latin America (RFA/88/S21)

32. This project is part of a series of activities which ECLAC has been carrying out in the field of urban transport, with a view to promoting and strengthening co-operation among the countries of the region in order to design and implement administrative and management policies for mass transit in the large urban agglomerations of Latin America. The project was started in November 1988 and is based on an analysis of concrete experiences in comparing productivity, costs, and the urban transport tariffs among countries that apply different models of fiscal intervention in this sector.

Project: Support for activities related to the design and preparation of the 1990 round of population and housing censuses in Latin America and the Caribbean through TCDC modalities (RLA/88/P08)

33. This project, which has the financial support of the United Nations Population Fund, was initiated in April 1988 with the objective of contributing to the co-ordination of the technical activities that are

required to ensure both the quality and the timeliness of the demographic and statistical information gathered in the census round to be undertaken in the countries of the region during 1990. The project is heavily oriented towards TCDC both in terms of the co-ordination of efforts to achieve common approaches and methodological procedures, and in terms of making effective use of national experts in census matters to train technical teams from other countries of the region, taking advantage of the greater relative experience that may be found in the country of origin of the expert in question. The work programme has been pursued through a series of seminars/workshops, which began in Lima, Peru, in October 1988, and focused on the management organization and strategy of the census. Other seminars under the project dealt with the following subjects: census cartography (San José, Costa Rica, November-December 1988); content and design of the census bulletin (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, March 1989); use of sampling in population censuses (Buenos Aires, April 1989); and the training of field personnel for field activities, (Havana, November 1989).

Project: Elaboration and dissemination of new techniques in public policy planning and programming (RLA/86/029)

34. Within the framework of this regional project, which is supported by UNDP and executed by ECIAC through the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning, assistance continued to be provided for horizontal co-operation in various areas related to the planning and programming of public policies. These include, for example, joint initiatives with CLADES in the field of the information sciences and information for development planning, aimed at programming and executing activities with the Latin American Federation of Users of Information (FLAI) and with the Regional Centre for Education in Information Science (CREI). Mention should also be made of the support provided by ILPES to the inter-agency seminar held in Brasilia in October 1989, on the important subject of decentralization and distribution of the social sectors and services with a view to strengthening co-operation among agencies and among national planning bodies in this field.

Project: Operation and planning of electrical systems in Central America (CAM/88/S06)

35. Activities under this project were initiated in mid-1988 with resources made directly available by the national electricity companies of the countries of Central America and are aimed at promoting the integration of the electricity sector in the subregion and strengthening the technical capacity of the companies themselves, through the execution of concrete studies and the undertaking of training activities in seminars and workshops for officials and technical personnel responsible for the management of this sector in the subregion. In this same sector, ECIAC, through its Subregional Headquarters in Mexico, carried out during the second half of 1989 activities which were entrusted to it as an associated executing agency, within the framework of a project on institutional development and the integration of the electricity systems of the region (DIEICA) being executed by the World Bank with assistance from UNDP.

Project: Promotion of technical co-operation through linkages among TCDC national focal points in Latin America and the Caribbean (Phase II) (HOL/89/S47)

36. Activities under this project were initiated in 1988 using resources provided by the Government of the Netherlands, and constitute the second phase of the parallel project carried out by ECLAC in 1987 which resulted in the publication and distribution of a catalogue of national institutions with experience in TCDC projects or activities, which was prepared with the collaboration of the national TCDC co-ordinating centres and selected institutions from individual countries. As a result of this second phase, it was possible to update information that had been published earlier, to review and improve the criteria for classifying and retrieving information and, more particularly, to expand the coverage to several countries which could not be included in the earlier version of the catalogue. This second version is part of the reference documentation which will be available to the Committee on Co-operation among Developing Countries and Regions at the twenty-third session of ECLAC.

b) Support for TCDC activities in relevant sectors

37. Apart from the activities designed to promote or support TCDC which are undertaken under specific projects such as those mentioned above, ECLAC has continued to participate in activities initiated by agencies and institutions of countries in certain sectors. In this connection, the following activities may be mentioned:

a) Activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group in Support of the Mining/Metallurgy Sector, which held its second meeting in São Paulo, Brazil, in July 1989, with the participation of ECLAC, the Latin American Association of Capital Goods (ALABIC), the Latin American Mining Organization (OLAMI), and the consortium LATINEQUIP. In this connection, note should be taken of the proposal of ECLAC to establish a regional enterprise for the marketing of mining/metallurgical products and inputs, machinery and equipment, which was discussed in the Ad Hoc Group and subsequently submitted to the Second Latin American Congress on Mining of OLAMI (São Paulo, 9-14 July 1989).

b) Activities of the System of Co-operation and Co-ordination among Planning Bodies of Latin America and the Caribbean (SCCOPALC), whose technical secretariat has been entrusted to ILPES. Within the framework of the System, the VII Conference of Ministers and Heads of Planning of Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in May 1989. The Conference dealt with the subject of the role of national planning bodies in the strategies to permit the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean a better insertion into the world economy.

c) Activities of the Regional Programme to Strengthen Co-operation among National Information Networks and Systems for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOLAC), which was launched in 1986 and is being implemented with the participation of ECLAC and UNESCO. During the course of 1988, several missions were undertaken to the countries of the region with the aim of supporting the establishment of national groups under the

Programme. In addition, ECLAC, through CLADES, which acted as the technical secretariat of the Programme, prepared a report on the current status and the operational strategy of the Programme to the year 1990.

d) Activities in support of the Permanent South Pacific Commission (CPPS), which include the technical co-operation provided to the meeting of experts on co-operation in ocean mining, organized by the CPPS and held in Quito, in June 1989. That meeting established the guidelines for a possible regional plan of co-operation among the countries that are members of the Commission, whose activities include scientific research; technological transfer; pollution control and the environmental monitoring of ocean mining; legal aspects; and planning of the uses of the ocean.

e) Activities in support of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC), a subsidiary organ of the Commission, which are undertaken through the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, which serves as the secretariat of the Committee.

f) The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean continued its work of promoting co-ordination and providing technical assistance to the countries of the subregion in the area of information. In addition to the project of the Information Unit on Patents and Documentation, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters participates in the operation of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning (CARISPLAN), and in the development of the Caribbean Information System for Agriculture Sciences (CAGRIS), in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (St. Augustine).

4. Co-operation among developing regions

38. The subject of co-operation among developing regions has been one of major concern to the regional commissions of the United Nations as a whole and to ECLAC, in particular. The subject has received priority attention at successive meetings of the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions since the mid-1980s, and this has been reflected in a prolonged and sustained joint effort to design a series of projects aimed at promoting co-operation among the countries of the developing regions, in various sectors of special importance to economic and social development, in response to the specific mandates contained in resolution 1983/66 of the Economic and Social Council.

39. Following the final revision of the selected projects by the Executive Secretaries at their meeting of February 1987, held at the Headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in Bangkok, a number of approaches were made, particularly to UNDP, to secure the resources for the implementation of some of these projects. These initiatives did not have the expected results and the subject was therefore again discussed at the meeting of the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions, held in April 1989 at the headquarters of ECLAC, in Santiago, Chile. At this meeting, the Executive Secretaries reiterated their commitment to efforts aimed at securing the minimum resources necessary to put underway a smaller number of projects, and agreed to support the undertaking of a

project on interregional transport, co-ordinated by the Economic Commission for Europe, under the general oversight of the Economic and Social Council.

40. In addition to the joint action taken by the Executive Secretaries to regularly review the subject of interregional co-operation in their periodic meetings of consultation and co-ordination, mention should be made of a number of specific initiatives which ECLAC has taken in this area:

a) Consultations with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), at the level of the respective substantive divisions, aimed at programming activities for the elaboration of a possible joint project for the exchange of experiences in the area of the formulation and implementation of technological development policies, a project which will culminate in the holding of an interregional seminar in 1991;

b) The participation of representatives of several African countries in the regular courses of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), which were offered during the 1988-1989 biennium, thus continuing an express policy of the Centre in the administration of its fellowship programme.

c) The participation of ECLAC in the meeting of the Directors of the Transport Divisions of the regional commissions, held at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York, in May 1988, in which various substantive matters related to the subject of interregional co-operation in the field of transport were examined, such as aspects of transport in the Mediterranean; deregulation of air transport and maximization of the benefits of tourism;

d) The participation of ECLAC in the meeting between the regional commissions and the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), held in February 1989, at the Institute's Headquarters in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The meeting examined the possible spheres and modalities of co-ordination and joint programming within the framework of the Medium-Term Plan of INSTRAW for 1990-1995. ECLAC presented proposals for co-operation in education, employment of poor, rural women, and the elaboration of new programmes for women in the areas of housing, water and energy;

e) Finally, mention should be made of the support activities carried out by ECLAC within the framework of the project ARG/83/011, which was completed in December 1989 and whose objectives included the strengthening of the capacity of Argentina in the field of co-operation with countries of other developing regions. Also participating in this project were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Argentina, UNDP and ECLAC. Through the project, it was possible to carry out a large number of activities to promote technical co-operation between Argentina and developing countries in Asia (India and Indonesia) and Africa, and to formulate various proposals for possible specific interregional TCDC activities which the national authorities may wish to consider for the immediate future.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

41. A review of the activities in support of TCDC undertaken by the ECLAC system since the entry into force of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and, in particular, the analysis of such activities during the past biennium, reveals a sustained effort to pursue the implementation of modalities of horizontal co-operation in order to execute the programme of work of the secretariat. The vital importance of TCDC to that programme and to regional co-operation in the broad sense of the term.

42. Activities to promote and support TCDC in the ECLAC system are directly related to the above-mentioned programme of work, whose main priority areas reflect the concerns of the countries of the region in the face of the tasks and challenges posed by economic and social development. This programme would permit the elaboration of criteria to identify possible sectors or areas in which the contribution of TCDC should be strengthened in order to achieve the objectives determined by the programme.

43. Without prejudice to the above, it should be underscored that the orientation of future work in this field, at the operational level, should be towards continuing the modalities of work used by the secretariat, and reaffirming certain basic approaches which should be restated here, such as:

i) increased use of extrabudgetary resources for carrying out activities to promote and support TCDC, in order to prevent financial repercussions on the resources allocated in the regular budget of the Organization;

ii) increased participation of ECLAC in the co-ordinating initiatives undertaken in the region to maximize the results obtained by the various regional bodies in this field, both within and outside the United Nations system;

iii) the strengthening of the collaboration and support activities for the national TCDC co-ordination centres --which are the vanguard actors in the area of TCDC-- at the request of the governments of the region;

iv) constant support, in co-ordination with UNDP and other relevant regional organizations, for the initiative taken by countries or groups of countries to pursue TCDC programming at the regional or subregional level, in those sectors that are considered priority for their economic and social development.